

Sub E1
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~~said first conditions are effective to produce a precursor polymer dispersion comprising particles of said water-soluble polymer at a level of prehydration; wherein, upon addition of a sufficient quantity of said precursor polymer dispersion to a final brine comprising an aqueous solution of a second salt at a final density, said precursor polymer dispersion produces a final polymer dispersion comprising a second concentration comprising final particles of said water-soluble polymer at a final level of hydration, said second concentration and said final level of hydration being effective at downhole conditions to maintain an effective level of a property of said final brine selected from the group consisting of rheology, fluid loss control, and a combination thereof.~~

Sub E3

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~~26. (Twice amended) A precursor polymer dispersion comprising: an aqueous solution of a first salt at a first density, said first salt comprising cations consisting essentially of cations of one or more multivalent alkaline earth metals; and a first concentration of particles of a water-soluble polymer at a level of prehydration; wherein, upon addition of a sufficient quantity of said precursor polymer dispersion to a final brine comprising an aqueous solution of a second salt at a final density, said precursor polymer dispersion produces a final polymer dispersion comprising a second concentration comprising final particles of said water-soluble polymer at a final level of hydration, said second concentration and said final level of hydration being effective at downhole conditions to maintain an effective level of a property of said~~

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final brine selected from the group consisting of rheology, fluid loss control, and a combination thereof.

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Sub E3

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42. (Twice Amended) A method for producing a brine for use in drilling and completion operations comprising:

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providing a precursor brine comprising an aqueous solution of a first salt at a first

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density, said first salt comprising cations consisting essentially of cations of

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one or more multivalent alkaline earth metals; and

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mixing a water-soluble polymer with said precursor brine at a first concentration and

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under first conditions, wherein said first density, said first concentration, and

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said first conditions are effective to produce a precursor polymer dispersion

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comprising particles of said water-soluble polymer at a level of prehydration;

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wherein, upon addition of a sufficient quantity of said precursor polymer dispersion

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to a final brine comprising an aqueous solution of a second salt at a final

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density, said precursor polymer dispersion produces a final polymer dispersion

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comprising a second concentration comprising final particles of said water-

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soluble polymer at a final level of hydration, said second concentration and

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said final level of hydration being effective at downhole conditions to maintain

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an effective level of a property of said final brine selected from the group

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consisting of rheology, fluid loss control, and a combination thereof; and

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mixing said sufficient quantity of said precursor polymer dispersion with said final

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brine.

Sub E47

57. (Twice amended) A precursor polymer dispersion comprising:
a precursor brine comprising an aqueous solution of a first salt at first density; said
first salt comprising cations consisting essentially of cations of one or more
multivalent alkaline earth metals;
a precursor polymer dispersion in said precursor brine comprising a first
concentration of particles of a water-soluble polymer at a level of
prehydration;
wherein, upon mixing of a sufficient quantity of said precursor polymer dispersion
with a final brine comprising an aqueous solution of a second salt at a final
density, said precursor polymer dispersion produces a second concentration
of final particles of said water-soluble polymer at a final level of hydration,
said second concentration and said final level of hydration being effective at
downhole conditions to maintain an effective level of a property of said final
brine selected from the group consisting of rheology, fluid loss control, and
a combination thereof.

REMARKS

Obviousness Rejections

The examiner maintains the rejection of claims 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 30-37, 38-41, 42-51, 52-64 and 65 as obvious over DD v. Mondshine v. House.